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TRIBUTE TO JOSIAH QUINCY

BY THE

Massachusetts Historical Society.

TRIBUTE

OF THE

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

To the Memory

OF

JOSIAH QUINCY,

JULY 14, 1864.

BOSTON:
MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY.
1864.

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TRIBUTE.

At the Stated Meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society, held at their Rooms, on Tremont Street, Thursday, July 14, 1864, after some preliminary business, the President, the Hon. Robert C. Winthrop, spoke as follows: —

Gentlemen of the Massachusetts Historical Society,

When we were last assembled here, at our stated monthly meeting, on the ninth day of June, our Society, for the first time since its institution in 1791, had on its catalogue just a hundred names of living members, resident within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. An election at the previous meeting in May had at length completed the full number allowed by our charter; and on that day our roll was full.

At the head of that roll — first in the order of seniority, and second, certainly, in nothing that could attract interest, respect, and veneration — stood the name of one who had been a member of the Society during sixty-eight out of the seventy years of our corporate existence; who had witnessed our small beginnings; who had been associated with Belknap and Sullivan and Tudor and Minot, and the rest of the little band of our immediate founders, in all but our very earliest proceedings and publications; who for seventeen years, long past, had been our Treasurer, and had repeatedly done faithful and valuable service as a member of our Execu-

tive and of our Publishing Committees; whose interest in our prosperity and welfare had known no suspension or abatement with the lapse of time; who had contributed liberally to the means by which our condition had of late been so largely improved, and our accommodations so widely extended; and who so often, during the very last years of his eventful and protracted life, had lent the highest interest to our meetings by his venerable presence, and by his earnest and impressive participation in our discussions and doings.

You all remember, I am sure, how proudly he marshalled the way for us into this beautiful Dowse Library, when its folding-doors were first thrown open seven or eight years ago, and when it might so well have been said of him, —

> "The monumental pomp of age
> Was with this goodly personage;
> A stature undepressed in size,
> Unbent, which rather seemed to rise,
> In open victory o'er the weight
> Of eighty years, to loftier height."

You all remember how impressively he reminded us, not long afterwards, at that memorable meeting on the death of our lamented Prescott, that he became a member of this Society the very year in which that illustrious historian was born.

You all remember how playfully he observed, a few years later, when seconding the nomination of the late Lord Lyndhurst as one of our Honorary Members, that the same nurse had served in immediate succession for the infant Copley and himself, and that she must certainly have given them both something very good to make them live so long.

You all remember how pleasantly he recalled to us that earliest reminiscence of his own infancy, when, being taken by his widowed mother out of Boston, while it was in the joint possession of the British army and of a pestilence even more formidable than any army, he was stopped at the lines

to be smoked, for fear he might communicate contagion to the American troops who were besieging the town.

You have not forgotten that delightful meeting beneath his own hospitable roof, on the eighty-third anniversary of the battle of Lexington, — the guns of which might have startled his own infant slumbers, — when he read to us so many interesting memoranda, from the manuscript diaries of his patriot father, in regard to events which led to the establishment of our National Independence.

Still less can any of you have forgotten his personal attendance here only a few months since, when, with an evident consciousness that he had come among us for the last time, he presented to us several most interesting and valuable historical documents — at this moment passing through the press — which he had recently observed among his private papers; which he thought might possibly have come into his possession as one of our Publishing Committee more than half a century ago; and which, with the scrupulous exactness which characterized him through life, he desired to deliver up to us personally, before it should be too late for him to do so.

No wonder, my friends, that we always welcomed his presence here with such eager interest. No wonder that with so much pleasure we saw him seated, from time to time, in yonder Washington chair, hitherto reserved for him alone; for he alone of our number had ever personally seen and known that "foremost man of all this world." No wonder that we cherished his name with so much pride at the head of our roll, as an historical name, linking us, by its associations with the living as well as with the dead, to the heroic period of our Revolutionary struggle; and no wonder, certainly, that we all feel deeply to-day, when we are assembled to receive the official announcement of his death, that a void has been created in our ranks and in our hearts, which can hardly be filled.

I have spoken of his name as an historical name; and I need hardly say, that it would have been so, even had it been associated with no other career than his own. His own fortunate and remarkable life, — embracing the whole period of our existence thus far as a nation, and covering more than a third of the time since the earliest colonial settlement of New England, — a life crowded with the most varied and valuable public service, and crowned at last with such a measure of honor, love, and reverence, as rarely falls to the lot of humanity, — was sufficient in itself to secure for him an historical celebrity, even while he still lived. But, indeed, his name had entered into history while he was yet an unconscious child. In a letter of the Rev. Dr. William Gordon's, dated on the 26th of April, 1775, and contained in his contemporaneous "History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of America," will be found the following passage: —

"My friend Quincy has sacrificed his life for the sake of his country. The ship in which he sailed arrived at Cape Ann within these two days; but he lived not to get on shore, or to hear and triumph at the account of the success of the Lexington engagement. His remains will be honorably interred by his relations. Let him be numbered with the patriotic heroes who fall in the cause of Liberty, and let his memory be dear to posterity. *Let his only surviving child, a son of about three years, live to possess his noble virtues, and to transmit his name down to future generations.*"

Nor can we fail to recall, in this connection, those most remarkable words in the last will and testament of that patriot father, whose career was as brilliant as it was brief, and whose premature death was among the severest losses of our early Revolutionary period: —

"I give to my son, when he shall arrive to the age of fifteen years, Algernon Sidney's Works, John Locke's Works, Lord Bacon's Works, Gordon's Tacitus, and Cato's Letters. May the spirit of Liberty rest upon him!"

Such was the introduction to history of him whose life is just closed. Such were the utterances in regard to him while he was yet but of infant years. How rarely is it vouchsafed to any one to fulfil such hopes and expectations! Yet, now that he has left us at almost a patriarch's age, these words seem to have been prophetic of the career which awaited him; and we could hardly find a juster or a more enviable inscription for his monument than to say that "he lived to possess the noble virtues of his father, and to transmit his name down to future generations," and that "the spirit of Liberty rested upon him."

It is not for me, however, gentlemen, to attempt even a sketch of the career or character of our departed associate and friend. I have indeed been permitted to know him for many years past, as intimately, perhaps, as the difference of our ages would allow. As I attended his remains a few days since as one of the pall-bearers, — a distinction which was assigned me as your President, — I could not forget how often at least forty years before, when he was the next-door neighbor of my father's family, I had walked along with him, hand in hand, of a summer or a winter morning, — he on his way to the City Hall as the honored Mayor of Boston; and I, as a boy, to the Public Latin School just opposite. From that time to this I have enjoyed his acquaintance and his friendship, and have counted them among the cherished privileges of my life. But there are those of our number, and some of them present with us to-day, who have been associated with him, as I have never been, in more than one of his varied public employments, and who can bear personal testimony to the fidelity and ability with which he discharged them.

We may look in vain, it is true, for any of the personal associates of his early career as a statesman. He had outlived almost all the contemporaries of his long and brilliant service in our State and National Legislatures. But asso-

ciates and witnesses are still left of his vigorous and most successful administration of our municipal affairs, and of his faithful and devoted labors for sixteen years as President of our beloved University. Meantime, the evidences of his literary and intellectual accomplishments are familiar to us all, in his History of the University, in his History of the Athenæum, in his Municipal History of Boston, in his Biographies of his ever-honored father, and of his illustrious friend and kinsman, John Quincy Adams, and in so many speeches, addresses, and essays, upon almost every variety of topic, historical, political, literary, social, and moral.

We may follow him back, indeed, to the day when he was graduated with the highest honors at the University of which he lived to be the oldest alumnus; and we shall never find him idle or unemployed, nor ever fail to trace him by some earnest word or some energetic act. Everywhere we shall see him a man of untiring industry, of spotless integrity, of practical ability and sagacity, of the boldest independence and sturdiest self-reliance; a man of laborious investigation as well as of prompt action, with a ready pen and an eloquent tongue for defending and advocating whatever cause he espoused, and whatever policy he adopted. Even those who may have differed from him — as not a few, perhaps, did — as to some of his earlier or of his later views of public affairs, could never help admiring the earnest enthusiasm of his character, and the unflinching courage with which he clung to his own deliberate convictions of duty. Nor could any one ever doubt that a sincere and ardent love of his country and of his fellow-men, of political and of human liberty, was the ruling passion of his heart.

And seldom, certainly, has there been witnessed among us a more charming picture of a serene and honored old age than that which he has presented during the last few years. Patient under the weight of personal infirmities; hopeful in

the face of public dangers and calamities; full of delightful reminiscences of the past, and taking an eager interest in whatever might promote the welfare of the present; grateful to God for a long and happy life, and ready to remain or depart as it might please Him, — he seemed, so far as human judgment might presume to pronounce, to have attained a full measure of that wisdom of which it is written, "Length of days is in her right hand; and, in her left, riches and honor."

Not many years ago, he prepared an agricultural Essay, which is now on our table. Not many months ago, and when he was on the eve of his ninety-second birthday, I met him at the Cambridge Observatory, coming to visit the institution which had been a special object of his interest and of his bounty, and to take a last look, as he said, at the great revealer of the stars. Still later, I found him in his own library, reading Thucydides, and applying the matchless periods of Pericles to the dangers of our dear land, and to the heroic deaths of so many of our brave young men. Nothing seemed wanting to complete the picture of such an old age as was described by the great Roman orator, and exemplified by the great Roman censor. Nor would it be easy to find a better illustration than his last years afforded of those exquisite words in which the great poet of the English lakes has translated and expanded one of the most striking passages of that consummate essay of Cicero: —

"Rightly it is said
That man descends into the vale of years;
Yet have I thought that we might also speak,
And not presumptuously, I trust, of age
As of a final EMINENCE; though bare
In aspect and forbidding, yet a point
On which 'tis not impossible to sit
In awful sovereignty; a place of power,
A throne, that may be likened unto his,
Who, in some placid day of summer, looks
Down from a mountain-top."

It only remains for me, gentlemen, to call your attention to the resolutions of your Standing Committee, which will be reported by the Rev. Dr. Ellis.

Dr. Ellis, from the Standing Committee, offered the following resolutions: —

Resolved, That, in the death of Josiah Quincy, — whose name has stood on our roll sixty-eight years, and for the last seventeen years has led the list of our members, — this Society shares in an especial manner in the feelings which have been manifested through our whole community. We honored him for the highest private virtues, and for very many services to the public in the long succession and the large variety of the offices which he filled, and the trusts which he discharged. We recognized in him a combination of the noblest principles which we venerate in the fathers of the Commonwealth, and the elder patriots of the land who were also his friends. His lofty integrity, his large and wise public spirit, the utility of his enterprises, and the practical benefits which are now enjoyed by us as their results, will assure to his name and memory enduring honors.

Resolved, That the President be requested to name one of our associates to prepare the usual Memoir.

Dr. Ellis then spoke as follows: —

The members of this Society, representing all the interests and pursuits of our higher social, civil, and literary elements, may heartily engage in this sincere tribute to the honored and venerated Nestor of our fellowship. He was the object of our common regard, and that of no ordinary sort or measurement. We loved to see him in these halls, if only as a silent listener; feeling that he helped us largely to realize history, and to connect the years that are gone by their best memories and virtues with our own living days. We loved more to hear his firm voice, as he stood erect under his burden of years, assuring to us an unchanging individual identity. We waited upon his always authentic and instructive utterances, whether from the stores of a faithful memory, or from those

almost printed manuscripts on which he had inscribed the terse matter, brief and full, which he had to communicate. Now that his own lips are closed, and we can no longer hold that delightful converse with him in which he made the men and the events of the two generations behind us to live with all their glow of vitality, we must look to books to tell us what was his own place and influence among them. He has told many of us his first recollection — a memory that might well stamp itself deep and strong — of his looking out from a carriage on the British redcoats at their lines on Roxbury Neck, a child of three years, when his mother, the widow of his patriot father, was among the last allowed to leave this then beleaguered town. He has prepared with his own pen the full autobiographic record of that part of his life which covers his political career, with its antagonisms, its sharp party strifes, its sympathies and antipathies for the soul of a good and true man. His own individuality in forming and holding to a conviction, of which the younger of us are not uninformed, stands attested on the records alike of the National and State Legislature, where he is found in each place voting in a minority of one. Let us hope that we shall not have over long to wait for the full memorial of him from the most fitting hands and the closest confidential trust to which he committed all his private papers. We may assure ourselves, that, even when those papers deal with what is antiquated to us, it will be in a way which will renew in them the fire and the vigor of life.

Besides a large number of pamphlets, Mr. Quincy has contributed to our shelves seven substantial volumes of biography and history, the subjects of which cover the career of some of his own contemporaries, or relate the annals and fortunes of institutions in which he himself held conspicuous trusts, and for which he did eminent service.

His long life was led through times and events of moment-

ous interest, beginning and ending at revolutionary epochs, divided by nearly a century of years. His associates and correspondents all through his career were men of eminence, of place, and of high personal qualities. He was himself the equal of the best and ablest of them. The qualities of those times entered almost into his composition and organization; they wholly controlled and exercised the development of his character and the direction of his life; and, while we share this common interest in him and in his career, there is hardly a member of this Society but had some special relationship of acquaintance or obligation with him, in his own private, professional, social, or civil range. Mr. Quincy held a succession of offices which gave him more than a functional headship over each of the learned professions, and a magisterial or advisory supervision of the various and most heterogeneous practical affairs of society. It is for that variety of service, performed uniformly with rare fidelity and with consummate ability, leaving permanent helps and advanced positions for all his successors, that we must speak of him with admiration and gratitude.

There is a stage or period in the development of every institution and organization, of progressive possibilities and capacities, when it needs the quickening or restorative skill of a man of practical energy, independent spirit, and firm will. One of the most characteristic distinctions of Mr. Quincy was his fitness for the successive offices which he filled at the time when he entered upon them, and in the condition in which he found them. Critical and exciting were the demands and the responsibilities attending respectively the Chief Magistracy of this city and the Presidency of the College, when he assumed those trusts. He found city and college alike in transition states, from old methods, limited purposes, restricted means, inconveniences and embarrassments, to more expansive, generous, and comprehensive possibilities, to the attain-

ment of which they needed the foresight of a large directing mind, and the guidance of an independent and bold spirit.

This city is deeply indebted to Mr. Quincy for many of those admirable elements in its works of utility, its institutions, and its present principles of municipal administration, our own pride in which finds its full warrant in the encomiums they have received from over our whole land and from abroad. Its streets, market, schools, and other public edifices, testify that while he was providing wisely, though some thought rashly, for what to him was the present, he had in view the much larger demands — we all know now how reasonable and moderate the provision for them — of a near future. Sometimes his schemes and plans were devised and pursued by his own fertility of faculty, under his own sole advocacy and resolute persistency of purpose. Sometimes he had the sympathy and co-operation of a few strong and wise supporters against sharp opposition from prominent individuals or a popular party. I never heard that in this office, or, indeed, in any other, he ever gave over any purpose or aim which he had proposed; nor can I recall a case in which any successor of his has undone his work. He loved what is good in popularity, and was utterly indifferent to the other ingredients of it; being quite an independent judge as to what constituted those respective elements of popularity. Of course, a man of his always rigidly upright, often stern, and sometimes severe spirit in the works of reform and improvement, especially those into which he threw the most of his own earnestness and pride as their originator, would be sure to meet many opponents. His opponents might also become his personal enemies, — a condition, however, contingent on his own feeling or judgment as to whether he should or should not so regard them. The younger portion of us are told of his ardor, his impetuosity, his severity of sarcasm and rebuke, in old political strifes. We are the rather prepared to believe this,

when, besides assuring ourselves, that, in his earlier life, men and measures engaged his attention which were likely to require just such treatment from a man of his rectitude and independence, we call before us his looks and tones as at times we have seen and heard him. He was compacted of Roman and Puritan virtues, allowing for the two meanings of virtue as preceded by either or both those epithets. He was able to stand the brunt of all the opposition which he provoked. He stood so clear of all imputations of sinister or selfish purpose, that, when his schemes and enterprises were challenged, he could give his whole advocacy to them, without any incidental effort for self-defence. He saw some stormy days, and was himself the subject of occasional hostility. He had to read the Riot Act, and to hear an angry mob surging threateningly near his own dwelling. The second line of an ode of his favorite Roman poet — *Civium ardor prava jubentium* — must often have come to his lips, though not without generous variations for the word *prava*. But none of those citizens would have disputed to him the application of the whole of the first line, *Justum et tenacem propositi virum;* though they might have preferred to emphasize the *Tenax propositi*.

Having, after six years of this city service, declined to be a candidate for re-election as Mayor, he was ready for quite another sphere in the College, which was also in a condition to require wise and energetic oversight. He began there, as he began everywhere, by acquainting himself with facts and phenomena, faults, needed changes, improvements, and the way and means for them. He put things to rights. He asserted his headship. He renewed, invigorated, expanded, enriched every old department of the University, and added largely to its scope and resources. He sometimes stood between the students and the authorities. He always stood over the students, — harsh and imperious occasionally in

word and aspect, faithful and friendly in counsel and feeling. They generally found out that the condition for respecting him was to understand him, and that the condition for loving him was to have no reason for being afraid of him. There are men doing noble service in all the professions around us, whose charges were borne by his private benevolence, while their spirits were cheered by his rallying encouragement. The question, I remember, was often discussed, whether he had real strong sympathies for young men, — could deal with them by wise allowances and gentle tolerances. Some said, that having striven with politicians, and presided over boards of aldermen and councilmen, and disciplined a fire and a police department, he sometimes confused the situation, and mistook his measures in his academic sphere. Candor and justice will be satisfied with the judgment, that, while there might have been reason for raising the question, — which, in fact, was one likely to suggest itself, — there was no reason for deciding the question in the slightest degree unfavorably to the fitness, the grace, or the conspicuous success, of his administration of the College. The living alumni of his sixteen classes will not fail of bearing some form of testimony to this. It was characteristic of him that he should have written the History of the College down to his own time. The continuation of it will have a good start from him. Those beautiful appearances of his of late years on its public days have been the joy of its alumni, and have drawn glorious tributes to him. Nor can one forget, in connection with his life at Cambridge, the generous and refined hospitalities of his home, discharged with such grace and dignity by that admirable lady who filled out the ideal of the old-school refinement and accomplishment.

We are sometimes helped to a knowledge of a man's excellences by observing in him some of those characteristics which are called prejudices. One of those convictions held by Mr.

Quincy was, that it was an injury to our young men to travel or study in Europe. Many of his pupils can call to mind, that, on informing him of their purpose to go abroad, they received from him the frank avowal, "I am sorry for it. The chances are that you will be ruined by it. But I hope not." He had never been abroad. When he was most free to go, he had no desire to do so. He was an American result of modified English antecedents. A true peer in nature and mien, unable to make himself honestly a democrat, he schooled himself to a special discipleship of an independent republicanism. He thought that he and his country had got all of good that England had to give; and as for the other foreign nationalities and their ways, they certainly did not present to him their enviable side or qualities. Coming of a Puritan lineage, through an ancestral line which had discharged the trusts involved in the developing of a wilderness colony onward to a self-governed commonwealth, he kept strong hold of the firm-set pillars of the fabric. To a thoroughly sincere piety, and a most reverential tone of devotion, he joined a spirit of independent inquiry and a demand for reasonable convictions in matters of religion. No layman could at the time have been set over the University who could better than himself have softened the shock or the reminder of the change in usage and observance from a clerical headship.

The honors and labors of his life had a felicitous consummation mingled of dignity and of beauty. It presented one of those very rare cases in which providential allotments, combined with human conditions and the peculiarities of a marked individuality, gathered their finest garland for a crown of tranquil and revered old age. This afforded opportunities for the mellowing of character, for the turning of all sternness into a self-searching of principles, motives, and actions, and for the vindication before all critical eyes of the well-tried integrity which had never faltered. The last decade of his

years was numbered, one by one, by some new token of the deepening interest and respect of our whole community. His calendar, as it advanced, was announced in the papers. The literary and oratorical fruits of his long harvest were credited to the verification of his own theory, that the way in which an old man should keep his mind from wearing out is to keep it hard at work.

He had hoped that he might live to see the end of this fearful civil strife which convulses our land, and which so stirred the fire of his noble inborn, high-taught patriotism. But, whether or not that should be so, his faith outran his hope; and he believed that it could have but one possible end, and that a righteous one, leaving us still a nation, but chastened and purified. If any one asked him of the cause and purpose of the war, he would have been likely to have referred his questioner to certain prophetic utterances of his own in the Congress of the United States, in January, 1811.

A full serenity of scene and feeling attended his release from life, by that rarest of all human experiences, a natural death, as the ripe fruit falls from the unshaken bough in the still air. He was waiting to be called, and was just beginning to fear delay in the summons. He lived at last for simple rest, and musing on the gleanings of thought from his last readings of his favorite moralists and philosophers, Cicero and Lord Bacon; trusting his memory and his spirit for diviner nutriment. To the end he read and wrote; and, because they were the last transcript from his pen, he has enhanced the sweet and gracious piety of the lines of Addison, which he copied as his hand was losing its cunning: —

> "When all thy mercies, O my God!
> My rising soul surveys,
> Transported with the view, I'm lost
> In wonder, love, and praise."

Dying in Quincy, receiving funeral honors in Boston, borne to his grave through Cambridge, and resting now on the slope of Harvard Hill in Mount Auburn, the closing scenes covered those of his life's labor and happiness. We may share his own strong hope of immortality, and believe that his life is rounded by something better than a sleep.

Mr. Everett, in rising to second the resolutions of Dr. Ellis, said, —

I have been requested, Mr. President, by the Standing Committee, to second the resolutions offered by Dr. Ellis; and I do it with the greatest pleasure, although his carefully prepared, just, and eloquent analysis of President Quincy's character, and your own pertinent, feeling, and most impressive address, have left me little to say. An opportunity will perhaps be afforded me next week of paying a tribute to his memory in another place; but I must ask your indulgence for a few moments at this time, to give utterance to the feelings which we all share, and which have been so eloquently expressed by the gentlemen who have preceded me.

You have, Mr. President, justly intimated the reasons for which President Quincy's decease should be noticed in the most respectful manner within these walls. He became a member of our Society in early life, and was considerably our senior associate. He took a lively interest in the Society, and missed no opportunity of promoting its welfare; attending its meetings occasionally down to the last months of his protracted life. Besides this, he co-operated with the Society in its appropriate labors, enriching the literature of the country with a series of historical works of high and recognized value, two of them prepared at the instance of the Society. Still more, sir, it may be truly said, that he not only wrote history, but made it, in the sphere (and that a most diversified and elevated sphere) in which he moved; exhibiting through life

those marked qualities, which, by sympathy, infuse moral strength into a community, and animate other men to the efforts by which individuals and nations obtain an honorable place in the annals of mankind.

I have said, sir, that President Quincy's historical works had a high recognized value; and most certainly, if his vigorous intellect, methodical studies, his untiring industry, and his great facility of labor, had borne no other fruit, the series of his historical publications would have given him, though not a man of letters by profession, a most respectable place among American authors. With the exception of Congressional speeches, and occasional essays on the topics of the day, his first work of considerable compass was prompted at once by filial affection and patriot duty: I mean the Memoir of his honored father, one of the most distinguished of those referred to by you, sir, who prepared the minds of their countrymen for the Revolution. He had the kindness to afford me an opportunity of perusing it in manuscript. It was appropriately published in 1825, at the close of the first half-century. It contained the journals and copies of some of the letters of the lamented subject of the Memoir, especially those written during his short visit to England in 1774–5, — the last year of his life; and I can truly say, that there is no volume which to the present day I read with equal interest for the events of that memorable year, as contemplated by an eye-witness — and such an eye-witness — in England. He had the inestimable privilege of hearing the two speeches made by Lord Chatham, on the 20th January, 1775, declared by his son, William Pitt, "to be surely the two finest speeches ever made, unless by himself." Of these speeches Mr. Quincy made a full report from memory, and from a few notes he was able to take at the time. It is in some parts evidently a more accurate report than that published by Dodsley in 1779, after Lord Chatham's death, from notes by Hugh Boyd.

Portions of Mr. Quincy's report were published in Gordon's letters on the Revolution; Mr. Quincy's papers having been placed in his hands while composing that work. The last entry in Mr. Quincy's journal is, "Had great satisfaction in reading my report of the debates in the House of Lords to one or two friends who heard them. They thought them exceedingly correct, and were amazed at the blunders, omissions, and misrepresentations of the printed accounts." President Quincy's Memoir of his father also contains the journal of a visit made by him to Charleston, S.C., in 1773, and which is of extreme interest. This youthful patriot, as you have stated, sir, died on the return voyage from Europe, and within sight of the granite cliffs of New England; young in years alone, mature in wisdom, patriotism, and public service. When we reflect that he was taken from the country at the age of thirty-one, we cannot suppress the thought, that a gracious compensation was designed by Providence in prolonging the years of the son to thrice that duration.

The History of the University is next in order of time, as it is the most voluminous and elaborate of President Quincy's works. It was suggested by the duty which devolved upon him on the memorable occasion of the second centennial anniversary of the institution. It was obviously, on the part of the President, a work at once of affection and duty. It embodies all those portions of the records of the University which throw light on its general history; on its feeble but hopeful beginnings; its gradual development in the succeeding generations and in the last century; its rapid expansion in the present century. It exhibits the noble steadiness with which Old Harvard has maintained itself through the storms of two centuries, and its re-active influence on the public opinion of the country. Especial pains was taken by President Quincy to do justice to the characters of the distinguished benefactors and patrons of the College, from

the ever-memorable Harvard to the present day. These and other pertinent and kindred topics are treated in his History in appropriate detail, according to their respective interest and importance, in a clear and vigorous, and, when the topic admitted, eloquent style of idiomatic English; the whole forming a repository, which, next to the original records themselves, will constitute the standard authority for the history of the institution, till its prosperous growth, as we may hope, through two more centuries, shall require other volumes and other dutiful pens to record its multiplied benefactors, its extended usefulness, and ever-growing honors.

President Quincy's next historical work of considerable compass, in the order of publication, was the History of the Town and City of Boston. Like the History of the University, this work grew out of an anniversary discourse; viz., that which he delivered at the second centennial anniversary of the city. Supended during his presidency at Cambridge, its preparation was resumed immediately upon his resignation of that high trust. This History, like that of the College, was truly a labor of love. The family of President Quincy had been identified with Boston from the foundation. His ancestor came over with John Cotton; and the position of his descendants had been maintained, in honor and influence, through all the succeeding generations. His father had taken an active part in all the memorable occurrences which had turned the eyes of the civilized world on Boston after the passage of the Stamp Act: the President himself, born and bred in Boston, had represented her in the State Legislature and in Congress; and, in the infancy of the new civic organization, he had served her at the head of its municipality for six years. Thus was he eminently a Bostonian of the Bostonians. The chief part of the work is naturally devoted to an account of the writer's administration, and of the series of measures relative to its public buildings, its markets, the eleemosynary

establishments, the fire-department, the schools, and other municipal interests, in which the public spirit, the executive ability, and moral courage, displayed by Mayor Quincy, cannot fail to awaken at once the admiration and gratitude of the citizens of Boston.

In 1845 appeared the revised edition of Graham's "History of the United States." It was published under the superintendence of a committee of the Historical Society, consisting of President Quincy and two or three other respected members. The first volume of this work contained a Memoir of James Graham, prepared, in compliance with a resolution of the Society, by Mr. Quincy, and embodying all that is personally known of a writer who cherished a warm and consistent affection for this country, and did more than any other foreigner to extend the knowledge of it abroad.

In 1847, and being then at the advanced age of seventy-five, Mr. Quincy, at the request of the late Mr. R. G. Shaw, prepared for publication the journals of their kinsman, Major Samuel Shaw, with a Memoir of his life. This most excellent gentleman not only served with great credit through the whole Revolutionary War, receiving at its close an emphatic testimonial from Washington, but he sailed in the vessel which opened the trade to China, as the agent of an association of capitalists formed for that purpose; and was appointed first American consul to Canton under the old confederation, and afterwards by President Washington. President Quincy's Memoir is a highly interesting contribution to the history both of the Revolution and of American commerce, a just tribute to the memory of a man of sterling merit, and well worthy the pen of the distinguished writer.

The year 1847 was signalized by the death of John Quincy Adams at the post of duty, and in the capital of the United States. He was the distant relative, the neighbor, the contemporary, the confidential friend, of Mr. Quincy; and,

at the request of our Society, the duty of paying the last tribute of respect to the memory of the illustrious departed devolved on him. He readily accepted the trust; and, instead of confining himself within the limits of a Memoir of the ordinary length, he drew up a volume of more than four hundred pages, embracing a comprehensive history of the life and services of Mr. Adams. The work did not make its appearance till the year 1858, when the venerable author was in his eighty-seventh year. I recollect no other instance in this country of so large a work from a person so far stricken in years; but I perceive in it no abatement of intellectual power. In a modest prefatory note, it is stated to be the object of the writer to narrate the political life of Mr. Adams from his published works, from authentic unpublished materials and personal acquaintance, and in this way to make him the expositor of his own motives, principles, and character, in the spirit neither of criticism nor eulogy. This difficult and delicate task was performed by the venerable author with signal success; and with this the series of his elaborate historical efforts closes. I need not say, that, with his other occasional literary labors, — several of which, such as the History of the Boston Athenæum, which I ought to have included in the series, were of a nature to require no little time and research in their preparation, — they form what would, in almost any case, be considered the life-work of an industrious man. But, till his retirement from the presidency of Harvard at the age of seventy-three, Mr. Quincy's literary labors must have been all prepared in the brief intervals of leisure allowed by engrossing official duties and cares. While, therefore, they would have given him an enviable reputation had he been exclusively or even mainly a man of letters, it must be remembered, that, in his case, the writer was overshadowed by the active relations — political, judicial, municipal, and academic — in which he stood to his day and

generation. On these I need not attempt to dwell: but when we consider that Mr. Quincy was for years, and with a brilliant reputation both for business and debate, the representative of Boston, both in the State Legislature and in Congress, an acknowledged leader of the political party to which he belonged; that, as a judge, his term of office, though short, was signalized by a most memorable decision, relative to the law of libel; that, as Mayor of Boston for six years, — an office assumed under all the difficulties of the transition state to which Dr. Ellis has alluded, — his administration was distinguished for the most important improvements and reforms; and lastly, that, with great acceptance and public favor, he presided over the oldest literary institution in the country, bringing to the arduous and responsible station a variety of qualifications, administrative and literary, intellectual and moral, rarely if ever combined in one man, and most certainly never surpassed; and that, having in an advanced but vigorous age become *emeritus* in this long and honorable career, instead of indulging in the repose conceded to the decline of life, he continued for twenty years, by word and deed, to perform all the duties of an active patriot, vigilant for the public weal, jealous for the public honor, and full of courage and confidence in the darkest hours of the present tremendous struggle; adding, finally, to all his other titles of respect and honor, the authority which length of years, attended with virtue and wisdom, can alone confer, — we must all feel, we do all feel, as we gather round the grave of President Quincy, that we have lost our FIRST CITIZEN.

Mr. Everett was followed by the Hon. RICHARD H. DANA, Jun., who spoke as follows: —

Mr. PRESIDENT, — I have received from the Standing Committee a request to say a few words on this occasion, — a

privilege which I suppose I owe rather to a family friendship with the honored deceased than certainly to any personal claims. It is hardly for me to speak of one, who had lived nearly his half-century before I was born, in the presence of so many who knew him so much longer and more intimately than I can claim to have done, though he honored me beyond my deserts. Before such an assembly as this, sir, I shall attempt no more than to notice one characteristic of Mr. Quincy; and, as to that, rather to speak of the effect he always produced upon me, than to offer an opinion or analysis of his mental constitution.

Mr. Quincy was a nobleman. He filled out our ideal of what the nobleman should be where nobles or conscript fathers rule in society and in the State. He had the merits, and he partook somewhat of the defects, of that character. He was favored by nature with the front, the station, the voice, the manner, that should belong to the nobleman; and, still more, he had in his soul the true temper of nobility. His was a lofty, high-toned character, — some perhaps would say, a proud and rather high-strung temper. Honored members have just told us, and told us with eloquence, and fulness of detail, of his fidelity to all duties, his integrity, and his laboriousness. It is for me only to tread this narrow path, beset with delicacies, and to recall to myself and you the high-spirited, chivalrous gentleman. Thackeray says that the "grand manner" has gone out. It had not gone out with us while Mr. Quincy lived. A boy at school, when he came to Cambridge, I met a man in the street, who, I felt sure from his *style*, must be Mr. Quincy, and raised my hat to him, and received a most gracious bow in return. It was he; and he could be recognized anywhere by any one on the look-out for a high character among the highest.

A good deal has been said to-day, and well said, of the spirit of liberty that inspired his father, and rested

on the son. I do not doubt or mean to disparage devotion to the liberties of all human beings; but there was in the men of that day a love of *independence*, that was no small element among the causes of our Revolution. Remember, brethren, that we were provincials, — governed by a class of crowned, coroneted, and mitred men living in another hemisphere, in whose privileges and dignities we could have no part. I can conceive of men with little or no aversion to such dignities in their own State, and with little confidence in political equality, rising in indignant resistance to such a subordination as that. It was that proud devotion to independence that Burke said united the holders of slaves in a common cause with the free North. After our independence was secured, when the conflict raged over half the world, between the radical philosophy of the French revolutionists and the conservative philosophy of Burke and England, the sympathies of many, of most, of our highest patriots in New England, were with the latter.

Mr. Quincy told me, not long before his death, that he had the means of proving, from the private letters and journals of the patriots who formed our Constitution and set it in motion, that their chief apprehension for its permanency was from what they feared would prove to be the incompatibility between the two classes of men, the two systems of society they would represent, who must control its policy and patronage. They feared an antagonism in a republic of equals, — between what was substantially an oligarchy, founded on slavery, and the free, mixed classes of the North. It was the more dangerous, because it was sectional and absolutely restricted. There was a sectional class, an aristocracy, or whatever else you may call it, with which the people of the Northern States could take no part, excluded by their moral convictions and by geographical laws. That this slavery, which met their intellectual disapproval and their moral

aversion, was a matter of State control and responsibility, was not enough. They feared that it would generate an aristocratic spirit, which would tell on the national life and national politics. They saw that it tended to foster an arrogating political class. They knew that oligarchal classes, with their interests, maxims, and sympathies, had often governed the world. They feared that the antagonism, the incompatibility, between these classes and interests, would lead to a separation; the weaker section, whichever that might prove to be, striking for its independence, — a separation made the easier by the fact, that the systems were separated by a geographical line. When I told him that I did not remember this in the published writings of that day, his answer was, that they earnestly desired a union for our strength and preservation, and kept out of public discussion the tender points; but that I would find it in their letters and journals.

I allude to these subjects, Mr. President and brethren, I beseech you to believe, in an assembly of gentlemen of all shades of opinion, only because they explain the political course of Mr. Quincy; at least, in my opinion, throw some light upon it.

It was Mr. Quincy's belief, — I do not wish to say here, on this occasion, and before you, whether it was a true or an unsound opinion; take it either way, — it was his opinion, that such an antagonism, such a growing incompatibility, existed from the first, and culminated gradually to the end. It was his belief, that the struggle between the Federal and Democratic parties was, to no small degree, a struggle between these interests. True, the lines were not so drawn. Most of the questions and the issues framed were purely political; but he believed the overthrow of the Federal party, and the installation of the Virginia dynasty, was a success to the slaveholding class, since which the education and property of New England have never had their share in the

government, unless in exceptional cases, and sometimes upon what may be called special terms.

Mr. Quincy thought that the contest of 1820, on the admission of Missouri, was substantially a contest between these classes and interests, and ended, as before, in a substantial success of the sectional, oligarchal system. Such, too, he believed to be, and with similar results, the struggle of 1850, on the admission of California; and such the final struggle of 1860, the first practical defeat of that class.

Now, sir, Mr. Quincy, so believing, so feeling, to the depth of his being, was not of a temper to acquiesce in that subordination. His independent spirit was enforced by the moral aversion he had for the system on which that dominant class founded its power. He could not bow to it. No: he feared, in the critical winter of 1860–61, but one result. That was not peaceable dissolution; it was not war. He feared only some compromise by which the slaveholding class, with its maxims and interests, should gain a permanent, social, and political ascendency over the free, mixed classes of the North. That was the one result he could not bear. Against that he would have been willing to rebel. Rather than that, he would have seen the Union, much as he loved and valued it, rent in twain, or severed into as many parts as it might please God to divide it.

You will remember, sir, that I am not presenting the highest view of Mr. Quincy's character. I know he loved the largest liberty. He not only advocated, — that is cheap, — he labored for, the greatest good of the greatest number. He saw in the present struggle far more and greater things than the political emancipation of the North from the control of a sectional dynasty.

Mr. Quincy loved public life, public duties, and public station. It is the more to his credit, that he never bowed, never swerved, — nay, was never suspected of bowing or

swerving,—to mere popular opinion. He paid little respect to mere numbers on a question of right and wrong. His creed admitted no such blasphemy as that the voice of the majority is the voice of God. Perhaps, indeed, his gallant spirit took a little secret, unacknowledged satisfaction in being in a brave minority. To no one may both parts of Lord Mansfield's celebrated declaration be better applied than to him: "I love popularity; but it is that popularity which follows, not that which is run after."

I do not know, Mr. President, what may be the custom of this Society on occasions like the present. I do not know whether you ever present to yourselves here the reverse of any picture of a deceased brother, — whether you ever examine here the weaving of the tapestry behind, by which the best effects are produced. But as I am, and have always been, an unfeigned admirer, devotee, of the heroic qualities of Mr. Quincy, perhaps I can the better touch upon what may be brought forward elsewhere, and what may have been considered in his lifetime, as defects.

I do not know what is the definition of bigotry. We ordinarily associate it with inquisitions and tortures; but I suppose it means only an undue confidence in and devotion to our opinions, and is consistent with entire kindness, and desire to do justice. In that scientific sense, if any one who has differed from Mr. Quincy, and has felt the shock of his collision, the *congressus Achilli*, should complain that he was severe, and even bigoted, I should say, that the manliest course was to admit, that, in that sense, there might be some ground for the charge, and to set it down as one of the infirmities of a great character, — one of those terms upon which alone, in our imperfect condition here, we can obtain such a fellowship and example. The denomination known among us as the Orthodox Congregationalist have objected that his "History of Harvard University" has not done them

and their colleges justice in their relations to Harvard. I have never read either side, and have no opinion on the question; but I have been told by good judges, partial to Mr. Quincy and his side, that the complaint is not without foundation. Such was his affection for Harvard and its supporters, such his convictions in its favor, that he did not see readily the qualifications and objections. Was it not so, too, in political contests? I am inclined to think we must admit that it sometimes was. But, having been thus frank and candid, I claim the right, in return, to remind you what these imperfections were, and from what they sprung. They sprung from no ill nature, no indifference to the rights or feelings of others, but from the depth and heartiness of his convictions.

Burke would not see — he could not see — Charles James Fox, though on his death-bed, much as he loved him. Why? Burke was so convinced that the French political philosophy, to which Fox had lent the aid of his great influence, was dangerous to social morals, and the very existence of any respectable body politic, that he could not dissever the man from the opinion. It is easy to say, that we must separate ourselves and others from our and their opinions. Perhaps superhuman beings would do so. If opinions are mere intellectual tenets, or if they are the cards with which we play the game of life, it were easy. Those men will find no difficulty in doing that, with whom opinions on vital questions of our relations to God and man, and the welfare of all here and hereafter, are no more than opinions on natural science or geographical statistics. If men are conscious, that, in themselves, there is no connection between their souls, their characters, their entire natures, and their opinions, it is inexcusable in them not to make the distinction in dealing with other men who differ from them. But, with Mr. Quincy, opinions on vital questions were convictions. They took deep root in his nature. They were inseparable from all he

valued or feared in himself, and all he respected or distrusted in others. They might turn out to be right or wrong; but they were drawn from the past, and bore upon the highest duties of mankind in the present, and the destinies of mankind in the future. They might be right or wrong at last; but to him they were *truths*, and he treated them accordingly. To his final convictions on vital questions, he was ready to sacrifice all, — even life. How could he treat them lightly? With such a character, on such questions, we need not fear to meet complaints from those who have encountered him front to front, — that he was severe, or even bigoted. We have little sympathy with those complaints when they come from men who met his scorn or rebuke for civil cowardice, or dereliction of duty.

It has been said that he was not a wise political leader. He certainly showed wise forecast in his own affairs, and in those of the city and university. In politics, he saw clearly into general principles; and, in many respects, divined remote consequences. Still, I confess, I should not like to promise myself or my party unreservedly to his guidance on the policies of the day and hour. Perhaps the combination of qualities in his nature, not easy to analyze, made him far-sighted, and not good at near sight. Perhaps his temperament did not admit of his dealing with men and measures as the policy of political management requires.

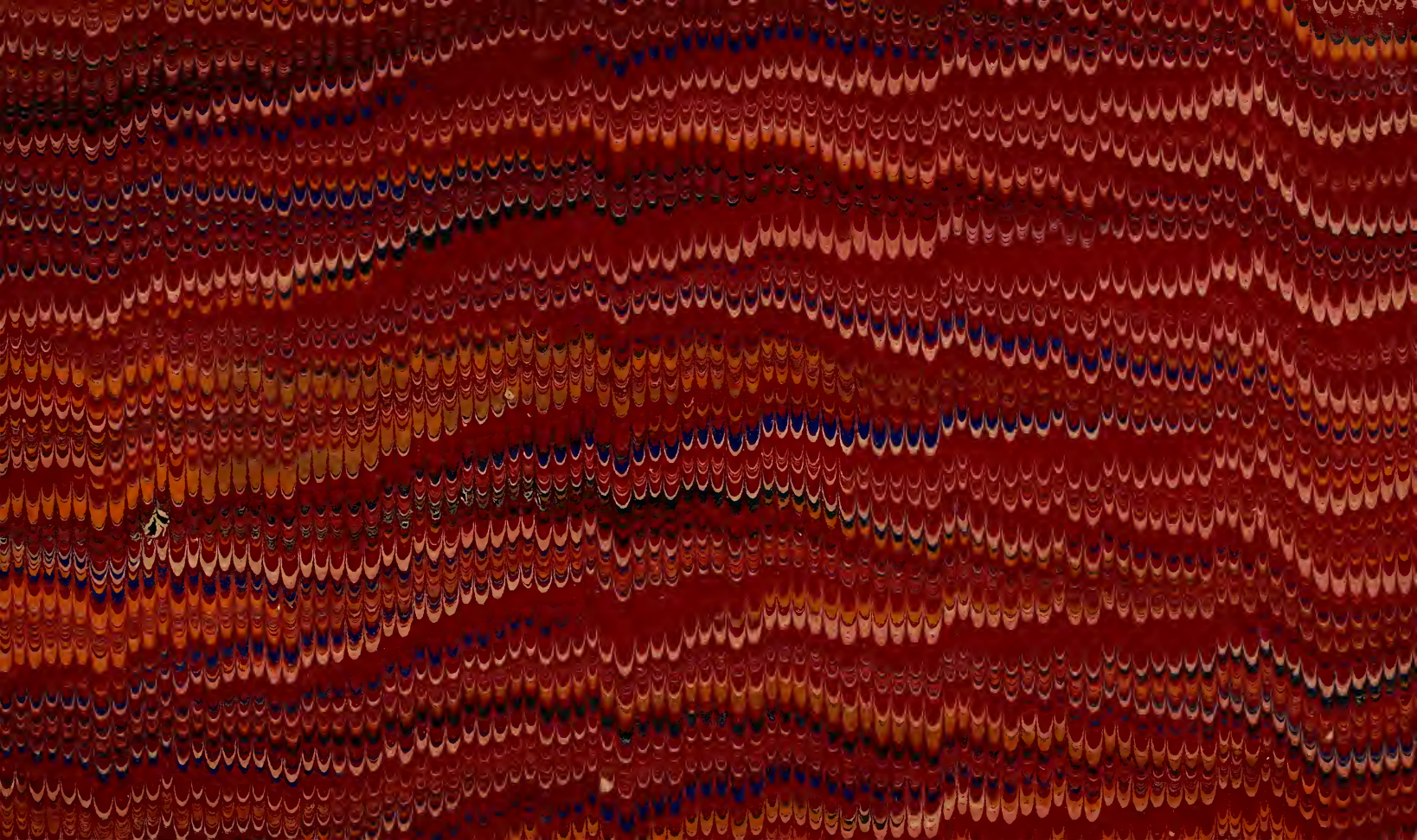
If I have erred in noticing these qualifications or deficiencies in his constitution, it is a great gratification to believe that in them I have noticed all the objections that have ever been made against him. What brighter eulogy could I pass upon Mr. Quincy than to say, that after a life spent in the severest conflicts of municipal, academical, state, and national life, in which he had much ungracious work to do, no charge has ever been made against him? I honestly say, I never heard of any, affecting in any way his private or public

character, which I have not touched upon to-day, and before you, his friends.

I would not underrate or gloss over, still less try to render attractive, imperfections, however usually attending lofty natures. But, if we regard the common opinion of mankind, they are not those that the ordinary New-England character most needs to be guarded against. The philosophy of Benjamin Franklin has done too much towards lowering the tone of the youth — I should rather say, of the partially educated youth — of New England. Franklin deserved, sir, the statue you helped to raise to him, and the eloquent oration with which you inaugurated it; for he did great things for science, and rendered great services to his country in her struggle for independence. He brought to the aid of his country sagacity, energy, and patience, and shed much honor on our infant name. But take from Benjamin Franklin what he did for science and the independence of his country, and try him alone upon his philosophy, and maxims for life, and I would rather, a thousand times rather, that any one in whose veins ran my blood, that any — all the youth of New England — should look to the example of Josiah Quincy than to that of Benjamin Franklin.

Mr. President, among all the true and gratifying commendations that have been and will be passed upon Mr. Quincy, I trust we shall not overlook nor keep in the background, but always put foremost, those qualities which made him the heroic, lofty gentleman.

The resolutions were then unanimously adopted.



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